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THE SISTER  
OF THE WIND

GRACE  
FALLOW  
NORTON



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By Grace Fallow Norton

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A SISTER OF THE WIND AND OTHER  
POEMS.

LITTLE GRAY SONGS FROM ST.  
JOSEPH'S.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK



THE SISTER OF THE WIND  
AND OTHER POEMS



THE  
SISTER OF THE WIND  
AND OTHER POEMS

BY  
GRACE FALLOW NORTON



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
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To  
OUR MOTHER OF MUCH UNDERSTANDING



*Out of my hours of idleness  
I wove my gift for you,  
And what it is, is all I am :  
It is not what I do.*

*For deeds would be but swords at last,  
Wherewith these hands, set free,  
Should hew new pathways unto that  
Same thing myself would be.*

*(Yet easier 't were to give the deed,  
Blindly, and thus have done,  
Than from blank spaces of the sky  
To attempt your fitting crown.)*

*Out of my hours of idleness  
And out of silence grew  
This gift of me that now I give,  
With all my heart, to you.*





## NOTE

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ON THE HILL

TO FAERIEL

*The red upon the hill  
Taket away my will.*

EMILY DICKINSON.

*Measure me not by thy sorrow's rod,  
Gauge me not by the rod of thy grief.  
Loveliness goeth not sorrow-shod,  
Though she be clad in the fallen leaf.*

*Stay me not in thy lanes of love,  
Bind me not in thy heart's lone haunt.  
Loveliness wandereth; from every grove  
Soundeth her cymbal and riseth her chaunt.*

*Tell me not: "If thou hope we hear,  
But shouldst thou despair we will turn aside."  
Loveliness knoweth and kneeleth near  
Pain and despair and peace and pride.*

*What was thy joy? I never knew.  
What was thy hope but my hope's hell  
Yet have I joyed when thy song rang true,  
Loving its loveliness all too well.*

*Other my fire than thy altar-fire —  
O and my far may be near to thee :  
Yet — hold me not to thy heart's desire :  
Ask but if Loveliness walk with me.*

## OF SONGS

OF songs I can make four kinds:

Songs of the corn and the crows in the air,  
Of the hill and of two wandering there,  
With dew and with darkness upon their  
hair;

And still songs about minds,

And my Thought who seems so strange  
and so old,

So cruel often and so cold,

But who weaves with radiant rose and  
gold;

And songs of the Joy that binds

All joys and is as a smiling Face

Out of faces, 'mid desperate places a Place,

All-good, All-graciousness, All-grace!

And songs of the enchanted winds

And the souls of the shining sorrowful stars

And night's pale Queen and the red god  
Mars,  
Of their hates and their woes and their terrible wars.

(Proud planets, they pass in their cloudy cars,  
And I sing them, beating my prison-bars.  
It is night, it is night, when I sing the stars!)



## REBIRTH

WHEN I went out to the meadow,  
When I went over the hill,  
The whole world was a-waiting  
My coming to fulfill.

The whole world was a-waiting  
To sing its song for me,  
To make for me its color—  
The earth, the sky, the sea.

I knew not that my going  
Was such a wondrous thing,  
Till I came unto the meadow  
And the world began to sing.

It sang: "To-day and ever  
Your soul 's another hue,

Because of the purple shadows  
And because the sky is blue;

“O you are changed forever—  
Bred in the blood of you  
Are beach and billow and shallow  
And green and gold and blue;

“Forever and forever  
Because of the ancient hill,  
And the motion and the music  
And the moments when all is still.”

And I have taken the purple,  
The green and the sunny gold,  
And the long, long years of the old hill,  
Although I am not old;

And I have taken the sea-swing,  
(Though who can carry a wave?)

And I have taken the sea-song,  
I shall sing it in my grave.

Encarnadined, incarnate,  
Bred in the blood of me—  
And I am one forever  
With the earth and sky and sea.

## INVOCATION

O SUN, slow-sinking, hail !  
O western coverts, hail !  
O wind, my brother, and earth, my mother,  
Hail and hail and all hail !

O silent forest, hail !  
O sighing billow, hail !  
And hail, fair-bodied moon, my goddess !  
I cry to thee, Lift thy veil !

*See, I stand before thee with my lyre.  
Strike, strike the chords with thy white fire  
And cast thy spell upon my song —  
O Sovereign, I have waited long !  
O part thy veil, pour out the strong  
Wines of thy beauty, for I dare  
To drink ; thy effulgence I would wear ;*

*Thy light, thy flight I would translate  
Into rare tones reverberate.*

*O Swayer of Tides, Enchantress, Queen —  
I lift my lyre ! From Heaven lean  
And break the strings, if so it be  
Thy suppliant have no part in thee !*

“AND I’M BUT A FLAME AND A  
SHADOW”

REAL, real, real —  
My hands in the meadow-grass,  
Insensate, a sea of green,  
Where the unthinking wind doth pass.

Real, real — gray wings  
Sweep over my sea of green;  
O wild gull, though thou livest,  
Thou know’st not what life must mean.

Real — O green meadow,  
Warm-bosomed, heavy, still . . .  
And I’m but a flame and a shadow  
That passeth over the hill.

## A PRAYER

I too would pray :

O King of Day,

O Queen of Night,

Send forth thy heralds, pale princes and  
angels burning bright !

Bid them bring me my desire,

Bid them yield me my delight.

I would have a lotus of fire

And a lily of light !

A flower of noon

And a flower of the moon.

A flower of flame and fire

And a blossom white.

Bid them come now, crying and singing,  
bearing my boon !

For I would have a lotus of fire

And a lily of light !

### MIST-MAD

It was because the mist had come,  
I must arise and go  
From out the arms that are my home,  
Mist-summoned, startled, slow.

It was because the mist had come  
That I arose and sighed,  
Gathered my garments white as foam  
And drew the still door wide,

And passed as silent as all hours  
That through all nights have flowed,  
Dream-whiter than the white lace-flowers  
That dream beside the road.

(Yea, silent as the hours that pass  
Slow-footed ere the light,



I trailed my mantle o'er the grass  
And floated through the night.)

My white feet moved within the dusk,  
I drifted down the vale.  
(O follow not, O never ask  
What made the night-owl wail !)

Within mist-spaces, like black towers  
The sudden trees did loom ;  
Then white mist closed, as close white doors,  
Sudden 'twixt room and room.

(O follow not, O ask me not,  
Nor mark too close the tale ;  
Suffice it that all eyes were shut  
And mist-bound all the vale.)

Mist-mad I held my white hands up  
To catch the faint moon-glow ;

Mist-mad I clove my hands' white cup  
And swayed me to and fro.

Mist-mad within a moon-shot mist,  
Mist-mad in moon-white shoon,  
I tore my veil, my hair I kissed,  
I bowed before the moon.

I turned me, turned me, round and round,  
And O, the spell pressed sore,  
But O, at last the word I found,  
And turned me round no more.

I called unto the veiled moon,  
I hailed the hidden stars,  
And tears I begged them for a boon,  
Chilled on the cold moon-bars.

Yea, tears I begged them they would give,  
My panting breath to free —  
That I might weep, that I might live —  
If they would succor me.

Methought they sighed, the silver stars,  
Methought the moon's faint sigh  
Was blown across her white altars  
To answer my lone cry.

For tears, gray tears they gave at last,  
To ease the fearful spell,  
And ere my mad mist-dance was past  
I had wept deep and well.

(O follow not, O ask me not,  
Nor mark too close the tale ;  
Suffice it that a wind was wrought  
And rain fell through the vale.)

I left my lover's arms, mist-drawn ;  
Long hours I was away ;  
The tears I brought him at the dawn  
Were still and chill and gray.

## THE SUN-WORSHIPER

Doth the world wear the West  
For a jewel on her breast,  
When she waits, when she waits,  
At the great iron gates?

*O my lover, O my lover,  
I have hastened Heaven over,  
And my flying feet have found no other rest.*

Doth the world wear the East  
For a robe to the feast,  
When she goes, when she goes,  
All in opal and in rose?

*O my lover, O my lover,  
I have hunted Heaven over,  
And my longing and my sighs have never ceased.*

Doth the world lift the South,  
Silver chalice, to her mouth,  
When she lies, when she lies,  
'Neath his azure ardent eyes?

*O my lover, O my lover,  
I have harried Heaven over,  
And there is no other cup for my heart's drouth.*

O white pearl of the North,  
Will the world know thy worth,  
On the day, on the day,  
When he turns away?

*O my lover, O my lover,  
I have hunted Heaven over,  
And again your cruel hounds would drive me  
forth!*

## MALERUDE

My love hath bade me bring a wave  
To cover her bright body bare,  
All purpled, fringed, and Tyrian-tinged,  
Fine as she is and fair :  
This is the cloak that she would have  
Beneath the torrent of her hair.

I brought my love a beryl-stone,  
A jacinth and a chrysolite,  
Got from a sage of hoary age  
Who cursed all beauty's might,  
(Nothing he had to call his own ;  
I too weep often in the night.)

I brought my love a heart-sweet song  
That passed me in the Wishing Wood ;  
For when a bird flew west I heard

The song fly east and stood  
Upon the eastern borders long,  
To snare the song for Malerude.

She laughed, the Scornful ! So I go  
With net and spear, with snare and lure,  
To bring the wave she longs to have ;  
I'll spear it swift and sure  
When foam about the rim doth show,  
Pure as her lips are vain and pure.

I'll take it when an opal flush  
Fills all the hollow and the frail  
Green reeds that bend above it blend  
With cloud and crescent pale ;  
I'll lift it in a holy hush —  
Thinking on that which it shall veil.

The little moon for broidery,  
For clasp two stars of faintest gold.

O for her hair to weave my snare,  
O golden fold on fold !  
O for a wave to cover me —  
She is so cruel and so cold.



## WEB ON THE LOOM

### *A Hill-Prayer*

I LIE still and dumb  
On the naked earth ;  
It is enough to come  
Where all things have their birth.

It is enough to lie,  
Web on the loom ;  
Weave, O Mother, I sigh,  
Where my torn threads leave room.

Dumb I am and still  
On the bare brown breast  
Of the deep-browed fecund hill,  
Where soon the sun will rest.

It is enough, O sun,  
To feel you pass,

To hear the singing one,  
The wind, move over the grass.

It is enough to know  
That there is light,  
That the green fields below  
Passive await my sight :

Blind on her breast to thrill  
'Neath sound and scent  
And silence of the hill,  
My heart with the hill-heart blent.

Mother, heavy I lie,  
Web of thy womb.  
Weave more life, I cry,  
Ere thou yieldest me shroud and tomb.

## THE GREEN CANOE

WHEN I come to visit you  
In my little green canoe,  
O'er the waters liling, tilting,  
Trailing lilies, fair, unwilting,  
Splashing, laughing, swinging  
Lazy paddle, singing  
Sweet, to you :

On your shore I'll find all spread  
A feast of fruit and faery bread—  
Kiss the cup you bring, love, flinging  
Round your shoulders, ever singing,  
All my lilies, looping  
Loose buds on your drooping  
Lily head.

This my song shall be :

*O I am the spirit of a tree  
And my sister is the spirit of the sea.*

*(Green canoe's the very tree,  
Kissing all day long the sea.)  
Look into my eyes, there be  
Rhythm, height, and mystery  
Of the tree, of the tree ;  
Rhythm, depth, and mystery  
Of the sea.*

When you know my song all through,  
Then farewell, farewell to you,  
My white love, I mind the calling  
Of the silver sweet enthralling  
Singing sea, where daintily  
Flits the far-off faintly  
Green canoc.

## ISLAND SONG

*From my isle to thy isle  
'T is such a little way,  
Across the twinkling waters  
Of our merry little bay.*

Thy pretty crescent island, leaf-gay by day I see,  
At eve, mist-shimmering, silvery-gray, from  
out my balcony,

Where lone long nights I dream that a summons comes at dawn,  
And springing from my hammock see the first  
green on thy lawn.

Ah, should there be a waving from thy wee  
tower white,  
I'd leap into my moth-wing'd boat and flit to  
thee to-night!

Alas ! From out thy turrets no signal bright I  
see :

Here still I roam a stranger and but dream my  
way to thee.

*From this isle to thy isle  
'T were such a little way,  
Across the moonlit waters  
Of the bonny little bay.*

## ON THE DAY THE SUN LIES DEAD

ON the day the Sun lies dead  
Who shall clasp his golden head ?  
Who shall plain and who shall moan  
For his empire overthrown ?

He that spun us, one by one,  
Lifted, loosed us — our lord Sun —  
Who shall heap his towering pyre,  
Faithful to his gift of fire ?

Shining warrior, he must lie  
Loveless, unwept, in the sky,  
All his host of stars around,  
Dead upon heaven's battle-ground.

Yea, this anguish he must taste :  
Paling, he must watch us waste ;  
Failing, hear us curse his reign,  
Innocent among his slain !

Nay, but One, who bore his light,  
Treading pallid, night by night,  
Where his burning footsteps led —  
On the day the Sun lies dead

May not She, queen-slave of hope,  
Through the twilight to him grope,  
Know at last her heart's desire,  
Leaping, faithful, on his pyre?

Ah, vain thought ! Her thralldom ends  
When at last her white bow bends  
And devoid of light her quiver —  
When her hope is gone forever.

On the day the Sun lies dead  
None shall clasp his golden head,  
None shall weep and none shall moan :  
He must lie alone, alone.



## AT SUNSET

THE West is burning and our hearts catch  
fire !

Lo, with bowed head, in awe before the pyre  
Of all day's dreams, I dare my dreams un-  
read.

O august sacrifice ! Driven to thy flame  
Was it a thousand bulls of heaven that came,  
When the white day by night's first shaft lay  
dead ?

Or hath Heaven's Rose, at last — too late —  
unfurled

The petals of her passion o'er the world,  
The purple and the amber and the red !

## THE SILVER RIVER

FAREWELL, I said, sweet meadow-grass.  
Farewell I let the light wind pass.  
I watch the shadows, one by one;  
Farewell, thou gold slow-setting sun.

I go within and fold my hands.  
O wondrous are the day's bright lands  
And evening's robe with roseate hem,  
But dearer now my dreams of them.

The stars I know creep to the sky;  
The moon will soon be swimming high;  
O light-filled pools and silver streams!  
O silver river of my dreams.

# FLAMES

TO LOUISA MENDOZA

. . . O *Vénus*, ô déesse !  
*Je regrette les temps de l'antique jeunesse.*

ARTHUR RIMBAUD.

*I walled me yestereven with indifference.  
But still the flames broke free —  
I dreamed of thee.  
My wild heart leaped and laughed, thou dear —  
Thou fair and dear —  
To find the red flame still so near,  
The white flame so intense,  
To which my life does reverence.  
My wild heart leaped and laughed. I strove  
To reach thee, love,  
To seize the flame  
And wreathe a garland for thy name.*



## THE DANCER

THERE 's a shining in the Northlands  
Because my lover is there ;  
It comes from his brow, the heart in his  
breast,  
And from his sun-gold hair.  
I am dancing alone in the Southland  
Because he is so fair.

When he sailed unto those countries,  
Intolerable on their night  
Fell the flaming of the leaping  
Of his white galley-light :  
They knew not in the Northlands  
That aught could shine so bright.

And I, nard-scented, silken,  
By tropic-fever tossed,

Lay burning, ever burning,  
    Though I was bound in frost ;  
For I, ere he had found me,  
    Though lordly lodged, was lost.

And O, I was anhungered,  
    And O, they brought me food.  
Gold were our fields, yet famine  
    Raged ever in my blood.  
He lived, he shone ! I lived not  
    Till I knew his kinglihood.

And now I dance in the darkness  
    And in the still noon air ;  
I dance in a dream at midnight  
    With a jewel in my hair ;  
My sandals crush the almond-blooms  
    Because he is so fair !



## LOVE IS A TERRIBLE THING

I WENT out to the farthest meadow,  
I lay down in the deepest shadow;

And I said unto the earth, "Hold me,"  
And unto the night, "O enfold me,"

And unto the wind petulantly  
I cried, "You know not for you are free!"

And I begged the little leaves to lean  
Low and together for a safe screen;

Then to the stars I told my tale:  
"That is my home-light, there in the vale,

"And O, I know that I shall return,  
But let me lie first mid the unfeeling fern.

“For there is a flame that has blown too near,  
And there is a name that has grown too dear,  
And there is a fear” . . .

And to the still hills and cool earth and far sky  
I made moan,  
“The heart in my bosom is not my own!

“O would I were free as the wind on wing;  
Love is a terrible thing!”

## THE HEART-SONG OF JACINTA

PART of my heart goes wailing down

As a ship goes down at sea ;

As an Indian woman goes to her own

When the death-fire sets her free.

Part of my heart has the tiger-pace —

Wolf-wild, fox-far, it hunts thy face,

To tear from the distance, to dare to wear

Again on my breast a space.

Part of my heart sits smiling, still,

Within its sealèd wall ;

And counts the treasures in its till

And the little memories all,

That crowd with thy honey-lips, thine eyes,

Till part of my heart in rapture cries,

“ Delay thy coming, love, yet a while,

These I would realize.”

Part of my heart, a joyous whole,  
    (Though thou art all in all)  
Is fated for love as the lily's bowl  
    Is fated for dews that fall.  
Part of my heart, dear love, shall stir  
To the sound of the foot of the wayfarer  
Who brings the ends of the earth in his eyes—  
    Ah, love me and leave me, sir!

Part of my heart with curious mien,  
    Slow turns away to its task;  
Let the wild thrush sing when its mate is seen,  
    Let the wild dove brood in the dusk:  
Part of my heart is woman no more;  
Part of my heart was human before  
The days of its longing and laughter and love,  
    Ere it sat by the silent door.

*Part of my heart, part of my heart —  
    'Tis strange that this should be;*

*Petal on petal, yet ever apart,  
And all of the heart of me!  
So now I turn from the sealed door  
And do the task that I loved before,  
And part of my heart is free, is free —  
The part that is woman no more!*

## FLAME SONG

I WAS a flame, I was a flame,  
That danced too hotly bright ;  
I hurt his heart, I seared his soul,  
I sealèd up his sight.

I was a flame, I was a flame —  
O fire of me that raved  
And lapped at all bright food of fire,  
Anhungered and aggrieved.

O flame of me, O flame of me,  
That leaped into his skies !  
Ahi ! Aghast at their great height  
I entered Paradise.

I entered and my dancing ceased —  
(A flame might die to live !)

Heaven, quench not utterly to ash  
For light I still would give.

A flame might die as souls have died  
When they would live again ;  
A flame might live as souls have lived  
That on the heights were slain.

A torch, a taper, O sweet Heaven,  
A little far-off mark,  
A gleam, a glow, I would be so,  
For comfort in his dark ;

A torch, a taper, O sweet Heaven,  
A star within his skies,  
Far from the flaming of my greed  
When thou unseal his eyes !

BALM

DID you hurt me ?  
I do not know ;  
I heard a little song  
Come and go.

Shall you hurt me ?  
You fear so ?  
Ah never doth music  
Cease to flow.



## WILD LOVE

FAR, far, far,  
Wild love, bear me far !  
Ranging storm shall be our steed,  
Where the lightnings lead.

Hot and fleet and far,  
Past the utmost bar !  
Thou nor I shall curb his speed :  
Distance is our need.

Out and out — afar !  
Fallen our futures are !  
Thou nor I shall give them heed —  
Chaos for our creed.

Wilder and more far !  
Wild love, touch thy star !  
Fire into my lips then read . . .  
Ashes be thy meed.

TO ESCLARMONDO

If thou couldst walk alone with thought,  
Alone within the day,  
Between thy soul and Heaven naught  
To shadow thy white way :

If thou couldst walk alone with dreams,  
Without the cloud of me —  
My sudden storms, my fitful gleams,  
My poor reality :

If thou couldst walk alone with light —  
Would then thine eyes see true?  
And were there thus a higher height  
For thee, a rapture new ?

Cloud, I would melt in willing tears,  
Storm, I would gladly go

Forth from thy peace through all the years,  
If thou wert safer so.

But ah, who walks with thought alone?  
Who is there knows but light?  
And who with naught but dreams has grown  
To that desired height?

## THE WAVE

A WAVE runneth through my blood,  
Yea, a wild wave lifteth me  
From his breast, my deep, my sea,  
To his lips, O Height-of-flood !

A wave runneth through my tide ;  
Set free on a far-off main  
By the breath of a joy that is pain,  
A wave bounded forth and cried :

“ Let me break, let me break at last,  
Flame on a burning strand !  
Foam on the lips of a land  
That hath not any past.”

I am lifted, O wild wave,  
I know thy voice in me,

The compelling ecstasy —  
None shall stay me, none shall save,

For I break, I break at last,  
Foam on his heart's wild strand;  
Here lieth the flaming land  
That hath not any past !

## I MOVE IN MISTS OF DREAM

I MOVE in mists of dream,  
Dream-bonds are on my hands,  
Shadow-shod I seem,  
Enmeshed in silver strands  
Woven on the looms of dream,  
In dim dream-distant lands.

Is there a day to come ?  
I would have no more days.  
Threshold of my heart's home  
Shall stay them on their ways ;  
Beneath my dream's white dome  
His weary head Time lays.

O Sower of the Seed,  
I have no horizon  
Save where dream-rush and reed

Wave o'er this memory won,  
The perished fragrant deed  
I harvest now, undone.

Master of my delight,  
Lord of this memory,  
Thou camest in the night,  
Even now thou callest me,  
Even now I lift the light,  
Trembling in ecstasy.

O lips and hands of flame —  
Will the spell never end?  
Life calls and without shame  
Life with my dream I blend.  
I move in mists of dream,  
Dream-doves my ways attend.

## IRINA

BECAUSE it is so cold and gray  
I dream wine and the south.  
Because I love no man on earth  
I dream of your warm mouth.

How I would touch my glass to yours!  
How golden it would ring!  
Because of the bleakness and the gray  
I let it thrill and sting,

The song that from your heart would fly  
When I had touched its core  
With warmth of mine and wine of mine—  
O your heart's waiting door!

Because I love you not, nor yet  
Would feel your hand o'er mine,  
I dare this play in a drear day,  
With dream-warmth and dream-wine.



### SIMONETTE

YESTERWEEK I loved thee ;  
Yestermorn I rose,  
Said, " Take back thy token,  
Thy red ring unbroken,  
Now I would be free."

I was free of loving —  
(World, O wondrous world!)  
But no woman knoweth  
Whence the mad wind bloweth,  
Ne'er should boast her free.

Yesterweek I loved thee;  
Now I love again !  
Life o' Love, how dare I ?  
Love o' life, what care I ?  
Pray, what meaneth free ?

Freedom was a stranger  
Come to dance a round;  
When I clasped him, turning,  
He was another burning  
Lover — like to thee!

## LIFE OF LOVE

I HAD to sit and watch it die,  
A little love that longed to live ;  
That had no right to live,  
Since all its ill-starred birth could give  
Was heritage of pain and sigh.

Could I but save it, were there wine  
And food to offer : bread for love  
And wine for the heart of love.  
Some poison that fine pulse might move,  
But wine ? There's naught save blood of mine.

My blood ! Then love, which of us dies ?  
My first strong bit of loving, O  
'T is hard to see you go,  
To see the fire fade and so  
Myself to lean and close your eyes.

## YEA AND NAY

O THE nay that I would say thee,  
The red, the ringing nay,  
Knew I the way to sway thee  
To beg me yield a yea!

O the nay that I would say thee,  
The flaming flagrant nay!  
For well, O well I weigh thee,  
Beneath this moon of May.

And well I know to stay thee,  
From day to dreamy day,  
Were one way to betray thee  
And were one way to slay.

'Neath hedgerows thou shouldst lay thee,  
Forever and ever stray!

O the nay that I must say thee,  
Beneath this moon of May !

O mad proud youth, I pray thee,  
Why dost thou still delay —  
Against thy will delay thee  
From day to dreamy day ?

O the yea that I could say thee,  
The warm, the wingèd yea !  
Nay, never will I betray thee —  
Go thou, go thou thy way.

“THIS IS MY LOVE FOR YOU”

I HAVE brought the wine  
And the folded raiment fine,  
Pilgrim staff and shoe —  
This is my love for you.

I will smooth your bed,  
Lay away your coverlid,  
Sing the whole day through.  
This is my love for you.

Mayhap in the night,  
When the dark beats back the light,  
I shall struggle too . . .  
This is my love for you.

In your dream, once more,  
Will a star lead to my door?  
To stars and dreams be true!  
This is my love for you . . .

## FAITHFULNESS

THIS is my flitting heart,  
In a boundless world, apart,  
This is my heart, no less.  
All day the wild thing wingeth  
And singeth of faithfulness :

*This is my heart,*

*Wouldst thou cage it ?*

*Then cage it with faithfulness.*

O this is my ranging heart,  
True love for its only chart,  
All paths it doth possess  
As ever wind-wide it wingeth,  
Still sure of thy dear caress.

*This is my heart,*

*Wouldst thou cage it ?*

*Then cage it with faithfulness.*

O, a falcon fleet for a heart,  
For its leash thy taming art,  
Bearing thy bell and jess —  
When farthest it fleeth it bringeth  
Most praise to thy faithfulness.

*This is my heart,  
Thou hast caged it  
With freedom and faithfulness !*



## A FAREWELL

THY breath upon my spirit  
Is more than I can bear.  
Thou seest me shrink before it,  
Knowing thee most fair,  
Yet — breathe not on my spirit,  
Nor touch not now my hair.

Draw not thy web around me.  
Thy delicate desire,  
The scented mesh that bound me,  
Hath flamed, a wall of fire,  
To madden me, to wound me,  
To stifle and to tire.

As avalanche, as thunder,  
It blasts me, yet not blind,  
I rise and rive asunder

The magic chains — my mind,  
Knowing thee fair, Fair Wonder,  
Doth know thee still unkind.

Yet ever subtle, fragrant,  
Thy beauty doth remain . . .  
Though wildly free, love's vagrant,  
I quit the courts of pain,  
Through some betrayal flagrant,  
I turn to thee again.

O Torturer, deliver  
My life into my hands!  
My heart is with the river,  
Flowing through many lands.  
It turns not back forever:  
Farewell, O golden sands.

VON EWIGER LIEBE

You say there is no love, my love,  
Unless it lasts for aye?  
O folly, there are interludes  
Better than the play.

You say lest it endure, sweet love,  
It is not love for aye?  
O blind! Eternity can be  
All in one little day.

## MAJESTIC HAWK

MAJESTIC hawk, we watched thee soar and  
circle in the sky,  
Thou and thy mate, he whom I love and I.  
We watched thee soar and mount and spire,  
high and more high.

Majestic hawk, he whom I love sees further  
in heaven than I.  
He saw thee, far and free—lost, lost on  
high—  
When I saw only thy mate beating against  
the sky.

Then the wild, wild wishes of our hearts,  
they sprang, they too must fly,  
And straight they flew till his was lost in the  
sky . . .  
But my wish was the mate of his wild wish  
on high.

## SONG OF THE SUM OF ALL

I HAVE loved many, the more and the few —  
I have loved many that I might love you.

All of my life was but loving and proving,  
The near and the far, the constant, the roving,

The sad and the joyous, the shadow, the part,  
With signs of their lacking marked down in  
my heart.

For never the goal and the whole were for me ;  
They were handle and hint, they were crutch,  
they were key,

They were bramble and bud but never the  
flower,  
They were dawn, they were dusk, nor ever  
noon hour.

They were soil-of-life, spoil-of-life, symbol  
and clue,  
But the soul-of-life, whole-of-life waited for  
you;

They were wave, they were tide, they were  
shade on the lea,  
But you are the earth and the sun and the sea.

### L'ENVOI

Now all my songs are over.

Arise and latch thy door  
And sing them to thy lover  
And say them o'er and o'er.  
Mayhap thou wilt discover  
That thou canst love him more.

And when the charm is over,  
Arise, unlatch thy door,  
And fare forth from thy lover,  
Although it wound thee sore . . .  
Mayhap he will discover  
He might have loved thee more. . . .





MANY MEN

TO NASIDIKA

*To clothe thy life with brilliancy  
And honor is to give  
Joy to the Gods : they love to see  
How pleasantly men live ;  
They love the crowned and fragrant head  
But turn their face away  
From those who come ungarlanded. . . .*

MICHAEL FIELD.

*Lo, to some 't was given  
By lightest touch to invoke  
A music heard of Heaven,  
Truths by angels spoke.*

*Heat have they to inflame  
Worlds with their least fire.  
What of those who dream,  
Unlit save for desire?*

*Longing for their lute,  
Love alone for lamp:  
Hark — songs of the mute!  
See — wealth of a tramp!*

*O desire, my gift,  
O desire, my goad,  
Thou at last shalt lift  
This desire, my load.*



## THE LOVER OF THE LILY

THE lover of the lily, the lover of the rose,  
Came once unto my secret, my scented garden-close.

I filled his hands with lilies, slender, perfumed, rare;  
The lover of the lily hath white hands lily-fair.

From garden unto garden he goeth and we give  
Into his hands red roses, white lilies while we live.

I chid my hands: Nay, give not! Save ye for one unfed.

(For beauty of the lilies, it is the soul's fair bread.)

I chid my heart : Ah, give not ! Behold he  
surfeiteth,  
And some there be that hunger, even unto  
death.

My lilies made me answer and my few roses  
frail :  
Bread of the soul, white Beauty, veiled Host  
and Holy Grail,

Flower of the soul, white Beauty, wine of the  
soul are we,  
Alone to him who seeth our beauty, born of  
thee.

For some there be that hunger — (white lilies  
bloom again), —  
And know not that they hunger, though they  
are blind with pain.

But one there is that seeth, beside thy garden-  
close :

The lover of the lily, the lover of the  
rose.

LIRON TO LALAGE

ALL of heaven was blue,  
Lalage, because of you ;  
What you saw I sought,  
Doom and dream forgot.

*O fair world !*

*Blue morn to me no beauty brings :  
Mine eyes see only inward things.*

Shrill sang each bird.  
Lalage, I heard, I heard,  
When your cry of glee  
Cut and quickened me !

*O fair world !*

*Yet not for me light song, whirred wings :  
Mine ears hear only inward things.*



Lilies flung a snare :  
Lalage, I was aware !  
Roses breathed through you,  
Rue you taught me too . . .

*O fair world !  
No more for me earth's censer swings :  
I'm wooed again by inward things.*

I return to dream ;  
Lalage, I leave the gleam.  
Lily, rue and rose —  
I am free of those.

*O fair world  
Of hints and tints and heart-burnings !  
O lost and saved by inward things !*

LAURENCE HOPE

I SHUT thy face away within thy book.  
I can no longer bear thy sombre eyes,  
Imperious, passionate, sad — so sad, so wise.  
Too many lives are living in thy look,  
Too many hands beneath those hands have  
shook.

I cannot bear the fumes of pain that rise  
From thine old ardent Eastern memories :  
I shut thy face away within thy book.

Would thus thine eyes might close. Too-liv-  
ing still,  
By temple, caravan and teak-forest,  
O Desert-Star, Aziza, Yasmini —  
Desire — thou burnest ever without rest,  
Though rest thou 'st sought with all thy  
weary will,  
Bidding the River bear thee out to sea.

## A LAMENT OF YASMINI

GOD made me in an idle hour,  
A chalice fit for wine alone,  
O would that he had made a flower,  
A wandering planet, or a stone.

O would he had not pleased him,  
Dallying, that day among the days,  
To mould the cup's curved perfect rim,  
That soon the red wine should upraise.

Alas, wan in the waning light,  
The wine that to his gaze was given.  
The cup was full of tears. . . . That night  
God wept upon the throne of Heaven.

## HELEN

I HAVE no heart for Heaven  
Since Helen is not there,  
I have come to long for Helen  
And for her golden hair.

I must go search in Hades,  
And if that shadowy place  
Knoweth not Helen's music  
Nor holdeth Helen's face,

I will lie undemurring  
Beneath the olive-tree,  
Assured at last that Helen  
Shareth the soil with me.

*For Agnes Baldwin  
who gave me a  
Greek lamp.*

## MAD MARY

Dusk came out of the wood and found the  
croft where I lay.

Lips as bright as the morning and eyes like  
the stars of night,

I dreamed of the morn of the morrow and  
midnight's dark delight.

Dusk covered my heart, all with her sleeve of  
gray.

Dusk covered my lips: O morning veiled  
alway.

Dusk dimmed mine eyes: now one are noon  
and night.

Dusk entered my dream and dulled my dear  
delight.

Dusk in my heart, dusk for my hope, over  
the hills I stray.

## THE HEIR

'T WAS a cold, cold day  
In a bleak little town  
By a barren bay  
Where the wind swept down.  
'T was drear and 't was lonely  
And I was the only  
Guest at the poor  
Little inn on the moor.

'T was a long, long way  
From my high castle-home ;  
There was no one to say  
The road I had come,  
Nor why I sat lonely  
And silent, the only  
Guest at the poor  
Little inn on the moor.

There was no one to say  
How I drank, how I sighed,  
Far away, far away,  
From Power and from Pride.  
O, 't was good to be lonely  
And free — and the only  
Guest at the poor  
Little inn on the moor!

## THE STRANGER

ALL through the village we are still ;

We wait for him to pass.

In the white villa on the hill

They turn and turn the glass.

He is a stranger — fair, they say,

And young. The young should live !

The beautiful, the strong, the gay

Deep into life should dive

And breast its waves and buoyant swim !

Alas, he drifts to port ;

Another current carries him

Beyond the billow-sport,

Beyond the harbor, past the hill,

Beneath the churchyard grass . . .

All through the village we are still ;

We wait for him to pass.



## THE DREAM LEA

WE would go forth unto a land of dreams,  
For we are weary of the things of day.  
We would find meads that ne'er have been —  
Songs that shall never be, beside those streams  
We'd softly sing alway.

There move and whirl and be at rest. The  
same  
And one these three will be. For we shall sign  
Our weariness away, to wreathe  
Forgotten flowers and wear an old strange  
name,  
Quaffing a stranger wine.

There heavy arms lift lightly to a wind  
That binds a body swift and light as he;  
There heavy heart allays its wound;

There heavy head is crowned with dusk-  
flowers, twined  
In hair held cloudily.

Sweet loves and sisters wait in this dim lea ;  
Shy creatures friend us on the faery way ;  
With sighs, enchanted lips unknown  
Kiss out the mark and lull the memory  
Of our far mortal day.

## POETS

THEY had great wealth of golden dreams.

We begged them of their store —  
The singing gods — for coin of dreams  
Is golden words' outpour.

To one they gave of their largesse.

O fair he spread his board !  
O there I've supped his cup to bless  
With many a laughing lord.

Sure one lies buried 'neath his gift ;

From one they did withhold ;  
And one sits doubting if to lift  
His single coin of gold.

To me was sparely, sparely given

And I spend freely — O !

To buy me little clouds of heaven  
To curtain my window ;

To fit a caravan so fleet  
'T will cross the desert skies,  
That I may dip my dancing feet  
In yestermorn's sunrise !

O WORLD, BE NOT SO FAIR

*From the German of Maria Jäger*

O MOON, O hide thy golden light,

O night, be not so fair ;

O ye dear stars, shine not so bright :

I would for sleep prepare.

Mine eyes are closing wearily

That watched the slow day's flight,

And yet there is no rest for me

In this enchanted night.

O fellow-men, be not too good !

O world, be not too fair !

Wake no new life-glow in my blood —

I would for sleep prepare.

My day is dim ; there beckons clear

A star of other air ;

And yet, and yet, my heart is here !

O world, be not so fair.



IN THE ROOM

TO O-LU-SI SAN

*Sans miel, sans fiel,  
Ma belle âme danse.*

JULES LAFORGUE.



*These are my moments. O I would  
Thou knewest the sisterhood.  
Child of their mood  
I dream and dance and sing and sigh,  
While their feet flit by.  
I lift a white brow to their kiss,  
Child of their bliss.  
I cry out quick beneath their bane,  
Child of their pain.  
I drink unto the lees  
(And I would die to utter these !)  
Their passionate griefs and ecstasies.*



## UNANSWERED

O I HAVE closed so many doors,  
O I have closed so many, many doors.

But secret hands slide all the bolts  
And silent feet glide o'er my floors;  
Eyes come betwixt mine and the sun —  
Who are the leaders of these strange revolts?

Behold, they are my Questions and they cry,  
“Unanswered I, unanswered I — and I—!”  
Unanswered every one.

Yet I have closed so many doors,  
So many, many doors.

## MYSTERY

### I

BLESSED and Accursed, none knows where  
thou dost dwell,

Nor if they live, who, winning to thy shrine,  
Cry on thy name and make thy secret sign,  
Find thee and see thee and still have thee well.  
None hears their word and there is none can  
tell.

Even I who bring thee daily tears and wine,  
I have not found thee, nay, thou art not mine,  
Though I kneel oft at bidding of thy bell.

Once I had touched and all but clasped thy  
hand;

Once I believed it was thy lips I kissed;  
Thy mouth was mirage and thy feet were  
sand!

Yet will I run beside thee all day long,

Cloak me at noontide in thy silver mist,  
And weave thy web and sing all day thy  
song.

## II

And they, even they, who 'neath the noonday  
sun

Pluck the red fruit and laugh and slay the  
wheat

And bind its gold and tread the grape and eat  
Their bread and say, "Now is our day well  
done";

Even they are acolytes of thee, who shun  
Thy name nor follow thy dusk-faring feet,  
Nor ever, O thou Awful and Most Sweet,  
Dreaming and singing to thy bosom run.

Ay, thou dost weave them though they weave  
not thee.

White and rose-red, with laughter, tears and  
sighs,

They move within thee and they are not  
free,  
They wear thee though they tear thy veils  
impearled,  
And trample them. But I, more subtly  
wise,  
I dare thee, draw thee, trembling, round my  
world.

## III

Then come unto the chamber of my heart.  
There thou shalt find thy doves and thou  
shalt find  
The flame, the fruit, the flagon, and shalt  
mind  
The curtained couch and thy still niche apart  
And all the holy silence of thy art ;  
And kneeling, captive, rapt, devout, resigned  
Unto thy service, so thou loose or bind,  
My heart, and evermore my kneeling heart.

Then come unto the chamber of my soul.

There is thy throne, majestic Mystery.

There thy choirs chant thee and thy great  
bells toll

Thee and thy ascending incense is the breath  
Of life, thy prayer the anguished ultimate  
cry —

O Hid and Dread, O Door of Life and Death!

## THE FLEEING FLAME

I WOULD give lessons in rapture  
And teach you the scale of desire,  
Till the dream that you trace and would capture  
Shall be as a flame of white fire

To blind and elude till you languish  
And cry for cessation of pain,  
And cry for a truce to the anguish  
Of a dream that is restless and vain.

And then I would touch you and teach you  
The sin of the sorrow of men  
Who desire without dream, I would reach you  
With lust of the lair and the den ;

Till the bloom of your bright lips shall wither  
And you cry that desire should be still,



And you pray me to lead your feet whither  
White peace hath uttered her will.

Then will I reveal in my pity  
The peace that men have upon earth —  
Her they seek in the streets of the city,  
Desiring through forest and firth,

Till you cry out and flout me, deriding  
The heart of her I call peace,  
Having learnt that no peace is abiding  
Till dream and desire shall cease ;

Till you rise to follow your rapture —  
Pale dream and ruddy desire —  
Though you know that 't is never to capture  
The fleeing flame of white fire !

## MOOD

WERE it melted into music

Would a soul go pure of stain ?

Voiced by viols should our weeping

Sound a silver strain ?

Bodied in a flute's outflowing

Might a grief elude its pain,

Fault and flaw and scar and blemish

Healed in song again ?

Nay, alas ! My soul sought music :

The high flute sobbed out her pain,

And the viols' dark despairing

Was my soul's refrain.

## HIDE ME FROM HATE

So now, Calais, thou givest me choice,  
In thy soft voice,  
To go forth lonely unto despair —  
(My soul could never lie there!) —  
Or to hate thee well, to wait  
And wrong thee with cold hate.

I have seen Hate; I know her hands  
That burn like fire-brands.  
I have seen Hate; I know her feet  
That lurk where murderers meet.  
I have seen Hate; I know her brow  
Might be my bulwark now.

Were there but two ways for my choice,  
As saith thy voice,  
I would go lonely unto despair!  
(My soul could never lie there.)

I'd clamor at her gate,  
Crying, "Hide me from Hate!"

I have seen Hate; I know her hands  
That burn like fire-brands.

I have seen Hate; I know her hair,  
Snare worse than all despair.

I have seen Horror! By the dark gate  
I cry, "Hide me from Hate!"

A PRAYER TO AN OLD GOD

*To Vulcan's hut show me the way,*

*Unto his furnace red.*

*Upon his anvil I would lay*

*My heavy heart of lead.*

Vulcan, Vulcan, hast thou fire

And will thy fire suffice

To melt mine anger and mine ire,

The iron and the ice?

And is thine arm strong as of old,

If fire fail to break

Stone and steel, seeking for gold,

Fair gold for my soul's sake?

Vulcan, lame and terrible,

Of metals such as these

A strong shield didst thou once weld well  
For kingly Achilles.

Terrible and lame, a god,  
Driveth my desire.  
By Heaven's heights that he hath trod,  
Have pity on me, Sire !

Melt me, Master, mould me, wield  
Thy hammer, make me whole !  
Make my heart into a shield  
For my faltering soul.

## IOLÉ

I LONG for white lilies,  
White roses and rest,  
White raiment and silence  
Like a dove's white breast.

Thy faun came too near me,  
(Well loved I the dance),  
My garland he blighted  
With his ribald glance.

Thy faun danced too wildly,  
His wreath was awry,  
His pipe was discordant,  
Too harsh was his cry.

I yearn for white raiment :  
My garland so gay

I've plucked at in horror  
And flung far away.

I long for white lilies,  
I ask to be still.  
O silence, his singing  
Come, cover and kill!



## THE PENITENT

I WILL come back and be a child  
And put away from me  
The daring and the dancing wild,  
The dreams that troubled thee.

I will come back and softer sing  
And tell thee stories true,  
And make thee many a lovely thing  
From out our drouth and dew.

But when thou sleepest I will run  
And dance upon the sward  
And tell the moon how I have won  
Thy praise for my reward :

And tell the moon how I must stay  
A child, and dream no more

Such dreams as I have sought to say,  
That tempted me so sore :

And tell the moon and tell the night  
How I have put from me —  
All day — until the dim twilight —  
The dreams that troubled thee.

## THE SORROWFUL

I WAKENED when the dawn-white  
Was flooding mead and moor,  
I wakened with the bird-calls,  
A thrush beside my door.

I wakened with the dawn-white,  
Yet sprang not from my bed,  
For the sin of all my sorrow  
Was heavy on my head.

I could not go to greet her,  
The Fair, the Perfect One,  
For the sin of all my sorrow  
Was cloud against her sun :

The stain of my great sadness,  
My grief heavy and gray,  
Yea, the sin of all my sorrow,  
It held me from the Day.

## WORLD-WEARY

I WOULD follow the fading light  
    To the silent shore of the sea,  
And there for a night and another night,  
    None should come nigh to me.

And if one came who would know my name,  
    My wish would carry me far,  
To the heart of the coldest faintest flame  
    Of the last and loneliest star.

And there for a day and another day,  
    My soul, wrapped in white fire  
To keep the questioning world away,  
    Would drink of her desire.

For she is fain of rest, her feet  
    Move not to music or mirth ;

Far solitude seemeth more sweet  
Than any joy of earth. . . .

But O, I know, on another morn  
My soul will arise and say,  
“World, I desire thee, flower and thorn!  
Show me the homeward way!”

## RENAISSANCE

INQUISITION came to me,  
Rack and screw and cell ;  
I was living Renaissance,  
Spring it was as well.

Inquisition came as friend :  
" Friend of mine, reveal  
Past and pathway, torch and tool,  
For my cross and seal."

I had naught but my young joy,  
Dancing in my eyes,  
And my world-old true desire,  
Beating through my sighs.

I had friendly hand for friend  
And a greeting rare ;

For the rack I had no creed,  
For the screw no prayer.

Inquisition read the doom  
Of my young delight —  
(Excommunicate of sin  
And the ancient blight!) —

Cursed and went. . . . And I am young,  
And I have forgot.  
I am living Renaissance;  
Spring it is, I wot!

## ABSENT

I DID not know that I had lived  
The little tedious day,  
For I was sleeping till the noon  
Had chased the morn away,

And then I rose and crept about,  
All in my robe of blue,  
But never heard how soft it trailed,  
Nor never felt its hue,

Nor scarcely saw the purple grapes  
Upon the silver dish,  
But only stood and could not think  
And could not even wish.

O not to know that I had lived —  
It was to lose the day!



And in the loss to lie benumbed,  
To lose the loss that way,

A curious anguish without pain,  
From which at last a Word,  
Born out of nowhere, brought me back —  
On bright wings, like a bird.

### FEAR-BRED

I WOULD have loved to tell you true,  
    O cruel lips, O cold blue eyes.  
I could not for my fear of you  
    And so I told you lies.

You were my little world. And then  
    The great world came, with wider skies.  
Alas, fear-bred, I feared all men,  
    And so I told them lies.

I made a hedge about my heart,  
    I made a high bright house of lies ;  
I kept my white soul there apart,  
    Safe-shielded from their eyes.

But well I wish one might come near,  
    Whose eyes would look into mine eyes,

And bid me lay aside my fear  
And lay aside my lies.

For I would love to tell you true,  
O unknown lips, O wide blue skies!  
I cannot for my fear of you,  
And so I tell you lies.

## A LETTER TO A FRIEND

My friend, my kind friend,  
I am writing you at the day's end,  
Out of my solitude.  
To-day I went up to the wood  
And at dawn I am going again,  
For I heard a cry there, as of one in pain.  
O I heard a little shaken sob,  
A faint shivering thrilling throb,  
And I knew, I knew 't was a buried  
brook,  
Though I could not stop or look.  
So at dawn I will rise and go and find  
The brook. I will go with the thought of  
you in my mind.  
I will part the violets, the wood's little  
daughters,  
I will lift the leaves and release the waters.

I will lift the leaves and tear the old roots  
apart,  
As once you lifted dead leaves and old roots  
from my heart.

*For H. B. D.*

## HEART'S HOLIDAY

WITHOUT, a city's whirling dust,  
A city's alley-wall;  
Without, a bleak pale strip of sky,  
Within, high festival.

Without, no greeting between friends,  
From the hurrying crowd no smile.  
Within, my heart's slow pageant moves  
In glorious solemn file.

There was no call for revel. Day,  
Who summons us each morn,  
Came forth in dreariest garb and blew  
No gala herald-horn.

But slave of day I am not, nay,  
Her mistress still, I wield

The crystal scepter of my mood,  
Bearing my dream's white shield.

Exultant, rapture-flooded, mad  
With mystic inner mirth,  
My heart holds her strange carnival  
Unseen of all the earth.

O SLEEP

TAKE me upon thy breast,  
O river of rest.  
Draw me down to thy side,  
Slow-moving tide.  
Carry out beyond reach  
Of song or of speech  
This body and soul forespent.  
To thy still continent,  
Where silence hath his home,  
Where I would come,  
Bear me now in thy deep  
Bosom, Sleep,  
O Sleep.



## A SONG

Now I will make me a song  
And make it sweet to the end.  
(O gray day, thou art long;  
Bitter the way thou dost wend.)

O gray way, thou art long;  
O Fate, where bideth my friend?  
Now wind the wrong in a song  
And make it sweet to the end!

My slender hands, are ye strong?  
The rod of Fate would ye bend?  
Ye can make but a little song,  
So make it sweet to the end.

O the rod, the lash and the thong!  
'Tis I that must bend, bend!  
But O, I will make me a song,  
Silver-sweet to the end.



THE WORLD'S CHILD

TO BRUNODDIE

*The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too  
great to be told.*

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

*My thought was fain to fare  
Vague avenues of air  
And cloudways lone and wild,  
Until it heard a crying child.*

*Lo, then it fled for balm and food,  
For pillow-down and fuel-wood,  
For lint to line a sleeping-nest,  
For father-heart and mother-breast.  
It tore its dream to bandages,  
It gave its hope the hurt to dress,  
And all the fair words that it knew,  
To heal this child it gave them too.*

*My thought was fain to fare  
Vague avenues of air  
And cloudways lone and wild,  
Until it heard a crying child.*



## SICK-LEAVE

I MUST take the road by the river  
    Since you exile me again;  
I must take the road by the river —  
    O my wonderful river of men !

I will find the path to the mountain —  
    (O mountain of mankind !)  
To shield me from the silence  
    I would ride in a calling wind

That shall be as my calling comrades  
    Who bear now my strength's arrears ;  
I must climb away to the sunrise,  
    For I dream of their white careers.

High in these valleys a lake lies,  
    And high and more deep in my heart

Lies my love for the life of the living —  
O why must I ride apart?

I will take the road by the river  
Since you exile me again,  
But 't is only a sign forever  
Of my wonderful river of men.



## ALLEGRA AGONISTES

A GLEAM of gold in gloom and gray,  
A call from out a fairer day.  
O pang at heart and ebbing blood !  
(Hush, bread and salt should be thy mood,  
Stern woman of the Brotherhood.)

Clamor of golden tones and tunes,  
Hint of faint horns, breath of bassoons :  
They wound my soul again, I lie  
Face earthward in fresh agony.  
O give me joy before I die !

World, world, I could have danced for thee  
And I had tales and minstrelsy.  
Kept fairer I had been more good —  
(Hush, bread and salt should be thy mood,  
Soul of the breadless Brotherhood.)

Some thou hast formed to play thy part,  
The bold, the cold, the hard of heart.  
Thy rue upon my lips, I toss;  
Rose was my right. O world, the loss,  
When Greek limbs writhe upon the cross!

## THE QUEST

'T is I went a-questing,  
Unhasting, unresting,  
To where the birds were nesting,  
Seeking of the Way.

And O and O, the eagles,  
The orioles, the doves,  
They love, they hate, yet learn not  
From their red hates and loves.

For far lies the heart's land,  
Her high-land, her holy-land,  
And far lies the soul's land,  
And far lies the Way.

I listened to the lilies —  
They had no tale to tell ;

The little leaves, the stately sheaves,  
Were ignorant as well.

And all through the tree-land,  
The forest-land, the free-land,  
And all along the sea-land,  
No one could say.

The moon it had no meaning,  
The stars were sterile too,  
The will-less winds go wandering,  
They know not what they do.

And though I searched the sear-land  
The desert-land, the drear-land,  
And passed unto the mere-land,  
My feet were astray.

I came unto my brother :  
He cried aloud my name !

Across the dark that bound us  
He flashed his signal-flame.

For he was the heart's-land,  
Her high-land, her holy-land,  
O he was the soul's land,  
And he was the Way!

## OF PRISONERS

My heart is breaking. O why can I not break  
yours?

My heart is breaking because of prisoners.

O the terrible walls of stone !

O the hours and the months and the days  
And Despair !

We laugh ; we go our ways,  
And they wait in their cells alone.

The cells are of steel and stone.

They sit and stare,

They curse, they weep,

And their souls die.

(O ask not a soul to live without light !)

And we go our ways and work and sleep

And sing, and we see the sky

And count it a little thing and cry

“Keep them hid from our sight !”

For we deem they have done us a wrong.  
For a wrong, O what is the price ?  
Alas, alas, what anguish will suffice ?  
And how long lasts the payment, how long ?  
O I dream at night of the iron doors  
And my heart is breaking. Why can I not  
break yours ?

## THE HALLS OF SHAME

ONE whispered as we read the name,  
“ O hasten, flee the Halls of Shame ! ”

But O, my bitter soul would know;  
It hath no faith in name or show.

And so I climbed the gilded stair  
And clasped hot hands that met mine there

And kissed pale lips I might have loved  
And read mad eyes, sad eyes, and proved

That they who tread the Halls of Shame  
Are blackened, blackened by the name ;

For O, my bitter soul stood last  
Within the shadow that it cast.



## TO CRUSH THE BUTTERFLY

A FRAGILE flower the soul,  
A butterfly on wing;  
Yet daily earth's dark powers enroll  
To bruise the tender thing.

*O Hunger, Hunger, would  
The soul were fed of air ;  
But no, it needs a body's food,  
The soul so frail and fair.*

Behold, armies are drawn  
Out of the fertile lands ;  
They break their camps at break of dawn  
And battle on the sands.

And souls are spilt like wine  
And none the reason knows,  
Save Greed who lurks where souls resign  
Their kinship to be foes.

*O Hunger, Hunger, would  
The soul were fed of air ;  
'Tis led unto the trough of Greed  
To feed the body there.*

Behold, navies are brought  
From out the hearts of hills ;  
Ploughing sea-furrows they have wrought  
The famine of our tills.

Famine — and farmers gone  
Upon the barren sea !  
Then souls are sold before the dawn  
Unto new slavery.

*O Hunger, Hunger, would  
The soul were fed of air ;  
But no, it needs a body's food,  
The soul so frail and fair.*

And lo, prisons and priests  
 And olden creeds of man,  
 Conspirators at separate feasts,  
 They end what war began.

And though great wealth belies  
 The clamor of the poor,  
 'Tis hunger e'er doth neutralize  
 The hope that's at our door.

*O Hunger, Hunger, would  
 The soul were thing of air;  
 For Greed hath fanned a bitter feud  
 'Twixt soul and soul so fair.*

Behold, great kings break plight,  
 Great teachers falsify :  
 Terrific powers of earth unite  
 To crush the butterfly !

## A CHAMPION OF TO-DAY

THE heart of the city cries through me  
(Her heart that 's a million hearts of men),  
Of her woeful need I may not be still,  
Though I am torn by her terrible will,  
Burn with her burning, her waste fulfill,  
Worn with her malady.

The mind of the city gropes in me,  
(Her mind that 's a million minds of men)  
And I strive alone in the market-place  
To find the meaning of each drawn face,  
The trend of her hope, through tears to trace  
(Her hope cries bitterly).

And the soul of the city, aflame to be free,  
(Her soul that 's a million souls of men)  
Cries, "The god of gold asks a heavy toll!"

And I cry, "Though gold be thy goad, O  
soul,

O it is not a god and it is not the goal!  
Heart's joy thy goal must be."

## PATHFINDERS

WE are making a new trail,  
New heights we assail;  
No traveler e'er has tried  
    This mountain-side.

We are making a new trail :  
(Hark, hear the wind wail !)  
Nay, no leader he can be,  
    A follower he.

Nor can the stars tell  
If we go safe and well,  
Nor the trees nor the tall fern  
    Where we should turn.

Naught that the wise know  
Our pathway can show,

Nor what their gods write,  
Safety invite.

We are making a new trail.  
Do we then fear to fail —  
Thou and I? How may we know  
Which way to go?

Dream doth drive us and hot hope,  
Through the fearful mists we grope,  
And we mount, we mount, but O —  
No more we know.

## CHILD, CHILD

CHILD, child,  
The city alleys reek ;  
By night-time and by daytime  
The passing engines shriek,  
And murky is the Maytime  
Where carriers hoot and cry,  
Yet here thou hast thy playtime  
And hast thy lullaby.

Child, child,  
Men say and poets sing,  
"Thy hope of joy, O Woman,  
Lies in this single thing.  
Of life or love, let no man  
Tell thee ought else were best :  
Thy joy of joys, O Woman,  
Thy child upon thy breast."



Child, child,

Alas, and if it be ?

Why sing the joy of mothers

And sing no song of thee ?

Who clamors now for others,

Rose-happed though they should lie,

He has not seen thy brothers,

Nor heard thy lullaby.

Child, child,

Some say thou 'rt doomed to fail ;

They cry we do not need thee,

So puny, piteous, pale,

And staying not to feed thee

They wait their darling's kiss.

O lest they hear or heed thee

Let them not boast their bliss !

O HUSH, MY HEART

O HUSH, my heart, while I recall  
The rosy-footed years  
When I had no heart at all,  
Only quick smiles and tears.  
O sweet it was and safe it was  
And O I would I were  
Still running with white dreams that pass  
Like clouds across the air.

O hush, my heart, while I recall  
The silent-sандаled days  
When I had no heart at all,  
Only my soul's white ways.  
O sweet it was and very strange  
To find a white soul so ;  
O would that I again might range,  
Heartless, her fields of snow.

O would I had no heart at all!  
For O, the stormy hour  
When my hot heart rose to a call,  
Bearing a crimson flower.  
Alas, my soul's wide wanderings,  
My limitless desire!  
Now all my dreams have heavy wings  
And hover round a fire.

Now all my world is made of hands  
That cling to mine again,  
And I am bound with iron bands  
Of passion and of pain.



THE SISTER OF THE WIND

TO MARGARITA MYSTICA

*Destroyer and preserver ; hear, O hear !*

SHELLEY.

*The wind hath been thy memory,  
O mortal, O man.  
Clad on with clay thou cam'st, but he  
Naked before thee ran.*

*The wind doth hold thy mystery.  
Even as thy soul, even so,  
Whither he listeth, bloweth he,  
And as thy soul, doth go.*

*The wind weaveth thy destiny.  
O lay down thy lyre !  
Thou art the lyre. To play on thee  
He sweeps through fields of fire !*





I

THIS was the secret of my mind:  
That I was made Sister to the Wind.

O I seemed a woman in my ways;  
I sang for men's praise or dispraise;

I spun, I wove unto their will;  
Yet ever calling over the hill

And through the forest, from the sea,  
I heard the voice of one more free,

Of one heart-brother unto me.

II

BAR the doors, he calls again.  
 (Ye would hold my hands in vain.)  
 Bar the doors, make fast the chain —  
 He is calling low.

Bind me, but think not to still  
 This wild heart or this wild will;  
 Bind, if ye would keep me till  
 He shall moan and go.

Bring the lights; watch me askance;  
 Bar the doors and bid me dance,  
 Forward, backward, in a trance  
 Swaying to and fro.

All my days a trance I deem,  
 All my dancing but a dream.  
 Wildly, Wind, this heart redeem,  
 That desires thee so!

Come within the unguarded night,  
Shake the earth with thy mad might,  
Stay the stars and quench their light —  
    Seize my hand and go!

III

WHAT is the singing that I hear ?

It is thy mother, child.

O no, it is my Brother Wind,

He sings more shrill and wild.

What is the sobbing that I hear ?

'T is for thy mother, child.

O no, it is my Brother Wind,

He weeps unreconciled.

For now she sleeps, the sweet white flower,

And happy still, and mild . . .

My Brother Wind cries, cries for me,

The lonely little child.

IV

O MORTAL mother,  
Flower of earth,  
I would that none other  
Had sung since my birth.

I would I had heard not  
Hope, white Desire ;  
I would they had stirred not  
Me with white fire.

I would that the Spirit  
Knew naught of my clay,  
Then might I inherit  
Thy beauty, thy way.

Then might I bide me  
With thee in earth's breast ;  
From the wild wind hide me,  
And from Unrest.

## V

MAYHAP I was not mothered  
Save in this flower-leaf flesh ;  
Thus strangely to be brothered —  
Caught in the mother-mesh  
From blue deep boundless seas of sky,  
Where winds float and fly.

Mayhap I was not mothered  
Save in this flame-wrought clay ;  
Thus strangely to be gathered,  
Fruit of a wider day,  
And poured, an alien unseen wine,  
Within this cup of thine.

VI

HEAVEN, hadst thou but given a mother of  
minds,

Of marvel, of mystery !

Of words of wonder and wandering winds,

Of gloom, of grief, of glee !

Heaven, hadst thou but given a mother of mad

Desire and madder gleams

Of mad mad hopes ne'er to be had —

A mother of these our dreams !

Heaven, hadst thou but given to this my soul,

To song and my soul and me,

A mother — so I be mothered whole,

Even in mine ecstasy !

My lonely brother, my motherless brother,

Far as a star hast thou sped,

Nor know'st thou the tenderness of that  
mother,

Nor where to lay thy head . . .

## VII

SHE made my body beautiful,  
She moulded me as fair  
As lilies by a woodland pool,  
She tressed my midnight hair,

She bore me to a green hid vale  
And laid me in a grove  
Of oak and ash, 'mid aspens pale  
And lilies of her love.

She kissed my wide and wondering eyes  
To make me wonder-blind.  
She kissed my lips — O wild and wise —  
To save me from the wind.

She kissed my hair, she kissed my heart,  
She kissed my hands, she laid  
Swift kisses on my feet that start  
So swift and unafraid.



She kissed me, O she kissed me, O  
    She tried to make me hers,  
To hush me, hap me, hold me so,  
    From the White Whisperers.

And I would be hers only now  
    But that the wild wind came  
And kissed me once upon the brow —  
    O hope, desire and dream !

## VIII

BUT all the songs I bring  
Are secret save to thee.  
Men must not learn this thing —  
To wander fitfully,

To rise and beat the air  
And dream in vain of flight.  
The world is very fair  
And sleep is sweet by night,

And they must reap and sow  
And sleep again at last,  
Untroubled by the flow  
Of wings upon the blast,

Untroubled by the toll  
Of startled bells, the cries,  
Untroubled by my soul  
That storms at last the skies.

IX

I LAY in the meadow  
And prayed as I lay  
To the lord of the shadow,  
The lord of fair day,

The god of white water  
And the dark god of earth,  
For I am their daughter  
And one with my birth

Rose fear of their power,  
So fearful I pray  
To the gray gods that lower  
And the god of fair day.

And then my soul wakened  
And spake to its kind.  
(Swift beauty betokened  
My brother, the Wind.)

And I lay in the meadow  
And laughed as I lay,  
For he rent the cloud-shadow  
From the face of fair day !

## X

“WIND-MAID, O Wind-maid,  
Waken and hearken —  
Sore am I afraid.  
They have sworn that nine lashes  
Be laid on my back;  
The sour dame had liefer  
I laid on the rack.  
They have sworn bread and water  
Should punish me well  
And the black priest has hinted  
O’ the hot fires of Hell.  
I cried, ‘’T was the wind  
Tore down from the line  
The laces so filmy,  
The linen so fine!’  
I cried, ‘’T was the wind  
Ran through the hedge-gap  
With christening-robe  
And kerchief and cap.

'T was the wind, 't was the wind!'  
Sore was I afraid.  
I said not 't was thou,  
O mad moody Wind-maid."

XI

HAST thou never heard him, the Harper of  
Heaven,

Harping and singing and sighing at even?

Hast thou never heard him singing 'neath a  
star?

Singing and sighing and striving afar?

I have heard him weeping when all sleeping  
men

Heard not and stirred not and cared not and  
then

I have heard him calling till I must rise and  
go,

The calling, the hailing, the wailing hurt me  
so.

## XII

HAVE pity on all things,  
Even on the wind that sings.

Often he feels he is alone,  
Hearing his sister moan.

Have pity on the bright restless gay  
Leaves ; they grow weary, even they.

Have pity on the little waves  
That are born in their graves.

Have pity on all souls.  
Even those who wear aureoles

And shine and stir and hear the wind —  
Even they are bound and blind.

(They too who, hearing, shake with fear,  
Knowing not the voice they hear;

They too who turn away  
And stop their ears with clay.)



XIII

THE wind died  
In the dead of the night.  
He faltered, sighed,  
And ceased outright.  
I move, I live—  
(I live, they say) —  
O gray, gray life  
With the wind away.

The wind died.  
I took my glass  
To the fireside.  
Gray breath did pass  
Across its gray :  
I lived, I knew.  
O would I were dead,  
Or would the wind blew !

The wind died  
And Song died too.

Fear, with his bride,  
Gray Terror, grew.  
I live, I move,  
Like a living thing,  
But what is the worth  
Of such living ?

XIV

O WIND, O wind, from where thou art,  
From where the aspen shakes,  
Come lullaby my mortal heart,  
My mortal heart that breaks.

O wind, from where pale grasses bend,  
From where flower-petals fall,  
Come rock to rest the dreams that end,  
Though they clamor still and call.

O come from where white lilies lie  
With silent hearts unstirred.  
Thy lullaby, thy chant, thy cry,  
Might bring their secret word.

Hush my hurt heart, quench the hot flame,  
O heal the anguish of  
A strangled hope, a dying dream,  
A bleeding mortal love.

## XV

It was still on the mountain  
When thy storm swept the world.  
Fearfully still in the forest where we slept.  
Then were white arrows hurled  
Upon the air,  
And in the hushed hollow where  
I had drunk of earth's crystalline flowing  
fountain,  
A torrent lived and leapt !

Thy thunders called thy lightnings, thou didst  
send  
Flame !!  
O Wind, thy terrible tribes came !  
Thy scourge fell,  
Thy lash was laid  
On earth that loved thee well.  
O Wind, wild Wind, was it the end ?  
My soul laughed ! Lo, I was unafraid !

Then send if thou must thy storm to break  
this bitter peace —

(O how shall I find release?)

Sound if thou must thy battle-cry,

Despoil me of my sheaves.

Cleanse!! Purify!!

Break the dead branches, fling forth the dead  
leaves!

Scatter the ashes of all the wayside fires!

Scatter the ashes of the old hopes, the old de-  
sires!

## XVI

I AM dreaming of my homing  
    Though earth calls home to me;  
I am yearning for the turning  
    Of the wind that sets me free.

For my far home is Forever;  
    How should I house with clay  
Whom the wailing winds are waiting  
    In their tower of Day-on-Day?

Faithful lovers of the fireside  
    Lay delaying hands on me,  
But my feet would run the heavens  
    And my soul stir up the sea!

And my heart — it is a wind-harp,  
    Music, music, o'er and through!  
Sorry mortals of a moment,  
    How can I give it you?

O my frail heart is a wind-harp,  
But your pulses cannot know,  
Nor your failing breath endure  
Its mighty music-flow.

Each in your day you 'll hear it,  
(In my boundless day of birth);  
I 'll go shrilling past your windows —  
You will shrink back to the hearth.

XVII

WINGS, wings,  
Wide and wild and gray!  
Come to me, comfort me, carry me away!  
Where the hooded Calms foregather  
Hinder not nor hold me, rather  
Bend me, send me, a billow out to sea:  
I have a heart that longs to be free!

Wings, wings,  
I hear ye sweep and sway!  
Find me, wind me, waft me away!  
That I share the scarlet splendid  
Path of Day, with Breadth be blended,  
Take me, break me, spill the soul from me!  
I have a heart that longs to be free.



XVIII

WHEN I lay within the mire —  
(O my soul, white flower of fire) —  
When I lay there, broken, stained,  
No one knew the wind had waned.

Rise, O Wind, I crave thee! Come  
From Heaven's high lit halls, thy home!  
Sandal thee and stalk with keen  
Sword in thy strong hand unseen!

Rise, O Wind, I crave thee! Call,  
Loud through Heaven's high echoing hall!  
See, I rise from out the mire!  
(O my soul, white flower of fire).

## XIX

To be bound so long and now to be free !

(Brother, Brother, hearest thou me ?)

The cord is loosened, the arrow sped,

The golden bowl broken, the wild bird fled,

O wild eyrie, to thee !

The clasp of the clay was sealed by a spell ;

(Brother, Brother, hearest thou well ?)

But a chain for my mind no magic could  
find

And the wings of my soul were the wings of  
the wind ;

Brother, they bore me to thee !

And now my body lies white on the wave ;

(O ivory beauty no wind-wish could save ;)

O come, let us sing ere it sinks in the deep,

And pray the sea-sisters to lull it to sleep

For wakeful it wandered with me.

I would pray the sea-sisters remember its  
grace,

As I remember its burdening embrace.

Hot tears and wild laughter, dark pain and  
mad play—

'T was my friend and my foe when together  
we lay !

What dreams it hath dreamèd with me !

Then reach me and teach me thy wind-speech  
again —

Brother, Brother, I've lived among men !

Prove me the range of the sea and the sky,  
The leagues that I long for, the heights I  
would try,

Restore and reveal them to me.

For I prayed but one prayer—incarnate of air,  
With Space and with Song and with Silence  
to lair,

To flee, shod with joy, past the uttermost bars  
Of night's height, on and on up the stair of  
the stars,  
Forever and ever with thee!

THE END

*If I could take fire and the light of all the lands  
And fling it backward over my book ;  
If I could take the flowers of this Spring and  
wreathe them into many-coloured bands  
And turning backward, garland my book ;  
If I could take gems from the dark mountain and  
shells from the shining sands  
And kneeling, backward, deck my book ;  
If I could take Beauty herself and naked Truth  
and white Humility by their strong hands  
And lead them backward into my book ;  
If I could sing this one song so sweetly (here at the  
end as it stands)  
That the sound should float backward through my  
book ;*

*But no, my songs — Strangers — you are naught  
but a spent wave.*

*O you flung yourselves high, but for me you have  
fallen in your grave !*

*Your souls not the whitest light of this morn can  
glorify,  
Nor this eve's clearest cry.*

*Let me go away. I would drink of deeper wells.  
All around me are fire and flowers and gems and  
shining shells.*

*Mayhap I will seek again to sing what mine eyes  
see.*

*O my wayward soul — lead me to Beauty her-  
self, to Truth and to Humility!*

*Que tout dieu s'envole, sitôt créé ;  
Que toute création périsse, sitôt créée ;  
Que l'ancien dieu offre sa création au jeune  
dieu afin qu'elle soit broyée par lui ;  
Que tout dieu soit dieu du moment.*

MARCEL SCHWOB.





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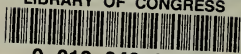
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